

Message Text

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ACTION EB-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7414

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENDERS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, CB

SUBJECT: SECRETARY OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

REF: STATE 183072

1. APPRECIATE YOUR CONCURRENCE ON NOMINATION OF LEONA FOR SECRETARY OF THE YEAR AWARD. HAVE NO CHANGES TO SUGGEST IN YOUR TEXT, WHICH I THINK FILLS THE BILL. BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IF I ENDORSE OR SECOND YOUR NOMINATION FROM HERE WITH AN ADDITIONAL STATEMENT, WHICH YOU COULD APPEND TO YOURS, AS FOLLOWS:

2. QUOTE I WISH PERSONALLY TO ENDORSE AND SECOND ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENDERS' NOMINATION OF MISS LEONA E. NIEMANN FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE YEAR AWARD.

3. QUOTE MISS NIEMANN HAS WORKED FOR ME FROM MARCH 31, 1974, THE DATE I ARRIVED AT PHNOM PENH, UNTIL THE PRESENT (AUGUST 22, 1974). DURING THESE NEARLY FIVE MONTHS SHE CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE SUCCESS OF MY MISSION BY TAKING OFF MY SHOULDERS OR ORGANIZING THE MANY ADMINISTRATIVE AND SOCIAL CHORES AN AMBASSADOR MUST ACCEPT WHEN FIRST ASSUMING HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES. BECAUSE OF HER TRULY OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE HERE; I WAS DELIGHTED TO LEARN FROM THE DEPARTMENT THAT UPON COMPLETION OF HER ONE AND ONE-HALF YEAR TOUR AT THIS POST, SHE WILL BE ASSIGNED AS SECRETARY TO THE AMBASSADOR IN PRAGUE.

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4. QUOTE SINCE MY ARRIVAL IN THE KHMER REPUBLIC, MISS NIEMANN

HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING ALL SOCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR ME. DURING MUCH OF THIS TIME, MY WIFE WAS NOT AT THIS POST WHICH MEANT THAT I RELIED EXCLUSIVELY ON MISS NIEMANN TO ARRANGE MY CALLS ON DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES, ARRANGE DINNERS AT MY RESIDENCE AND GENERALLY HAVE HER ACT AS MY PROTOCOL OFFICER. UNDER MY BROAD GUIDANCE, SHE PLANNED SOCIAL EVENTS, BOTH FOR AMERICANS AND FOREIGNERS, WHICH MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO DEVOTE MY EFFORTS TO URGENT PROFESSIONAL MATTEES. IN ORDER TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS FOR ME WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS, MISS NIEMANN WAS REQUIRED TO COMMUNICATE IN FRENCH. SHE IS SUFFICIENTLY PROFICIENT IN FRENCH TO TAKE MESSAGES AND CONVEY MY VIEWS TO FRENCH-SPEAKING CAMBODIANS EITHER BY TELEPHONE OR BY DIRECT CONTACT. HER KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH IS ALSO INDISPENSABLE IN TRANSCRIBING SOME OF MY HAND WRITTEN NOTES WHICH NEED TO BE TYPED BEFORE BEING SENT TO THE GOVERNMENT. SHE IS ONE OF THE TWO SECRETARIES AT THIS POST WHO HAVE A SUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE TO TYPE FRENCH TEXTS WITHOUT MISTAKES. SINCE MOST OF THE IMPORTANT CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT IS IN FRENCH, THIS LANGUAGE QUALIFICATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY TO THE CHIEF OF MISSION.

5. QUOTE MISS NIEMANN'S TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS ARE ALSO NOTEWORTHY. SHE TRANSCRIBES DICTATION RAPIDLY; HER TYPING IS BOTH FAST AND VERY NEAT. WHILE SHE MAINTAINS ONLY MINIMUM FILES BECAUSE OF THE WAR RISKS AT THIS POST, THOSE FILES WHICH ARE RETAINED ARE METICULOUSLY KEPT AND ARE VERY COMPLETE. I SHOULD ALSO NOTE THIS MISS NIEMANN MAINTAINS DETAILED FILES ON FISCAL AND FINANCIAL DATA RELATED TO MY OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS AT THIS POST. SHE ACTS AS MY DISBURSING OFFICER, A CAPACITY IN WHICH SHE KEEPS TABS ON SEVERAL THOUSAND DOLLARS.

6. QUOTE IF I WOULD HAVE TO SINGLE OUT ONE CHARACTERISTIC WHICH SETS HER APART FROM OTHER GOOD SECRETARYIES, I WOULD HAVE TO NOTE HER CONSCIENTIOUSNESS. SHE IS THE MOST CONSCIENTIOUS SECRETARY I HAVE MET IN MY 24 YEARS OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE. SHE ANTICIPATES ADMINISTRATIVE AND SECRETARIAL NEEDS OF THE CHIEF OF MISSION. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN I HAVE IMPORTANT APPOINTMENTS OUTSIDE THE CHANCERY, EVEN IF ON SUNDAY, I NEED NOT ASK HER TO COME TO THE OFFICE, SHE WILL ALREADY HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO BE AT THE CHANCERY IN CASE HER SERVICES ARE NEEDED. SHE KEEPS VERY LONG HOURS: FROM SEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING UNTIL SEVEN O'CLOCK AT NIGHT, WITH A ONE-HOUR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BREAK FOR LUNCH. SHE ALSO WORKS ON SATURDAYS AND FREQUENTLY ON SUNDAY. DESPITE THESE CONSIDERABLE PROFESSIONAL DEMANDS ON HER, MISS NIEMANN KEEPS A CHEERFUL, OUTGOING DISPOSITION.

7. QUOTE SHE IS ESTEEMED BY HER COLLEAGUES FOR HER PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND HER PERSONAL QUALITIES. I WISH TO QUOTE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WHICH WAS VOLUNTEERED BY A KEY MEMBER OF THE PHNOM

PENH COUNTRY TEAM, THE FORMER DEFENSE ATTACHE, COLONEL RAY L. BURNELL, WHOSE SERVICE HERE COINCIDED WITH MOST OF MISS NIEMANN'S TOUR. HIS REMARKS ARE INDICATIVE OF THE HIGH ESTEEM IN WHICH SHE WAS HELD BY THE CHIEFS OF OTHER AGENCIES REPRESENTED HERE WITH WHOM SHE WAS IN DAILY CLOSE CONTACT AS THE CHIEF OF MISSION'S SECRETARY:

QUOTE MISS NIEMANN HAS DISPLAYED ALL OF THOSE ATTRIBUTES ONE WOULD NORMALLY ASSOCIATE WITH THE QUOTE MODEL UNQUOTE SECRETARY. BUT MORE THAN THAT, SHE HAS BEEN AN INDEFATIGABLE WORKER WHO HAS ALWAYS BEEN WILLING TO SHARE HER QUOTE KNOW-HOW UNQUOTE WITH LESS EXPERIENCED MEMBERS OF THIS SMALL AMERICAN COMMUNITY. THESE ACCOMPLISHMENTS HAVE BEEN PERFORMED IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE ENEMY ATTACKS BY FIRE ON THE AREA IMMEDIATELY SURROUNDING THE AMERICAN EMBASSY HAVE BEEN FREQUENT AND AT TIMES INTENSE. DESPITE THIS DETERRENT TO PERFORMANCE EFFICIENCY MISS NIEMANN HAS CONTINUED TO DEMONSTRATE HER PROWESS AND DETERMINATION TO INSURE THAT THE JOB WAS ACCOMPLISHED. WORKING EACH AND EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK SHE HAS BEEN AN INSPIRATION TO THE MEMBERS OF THIS DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE. HER KNOWLEDGE, CHEERFUL DISPOSITION AND WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST HAVE ALL CONTRIBUTED TO THE EFFICIENT OPERATION OF THIS OFFICE. BASED ON HER DEMONSTRATED PERFORMANCE SHE FULLY MERITS THE ACCOLADE OF DEPARTMENT OF STATE SECRETARY OF THE YEAR. UNQUOTE

8. QUOTE I KNOW OF NO SECRETARY I HAVE WORKED WITH DURING MY 24 YEARS OF WORK IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE WHO WOULD BE MORE DESERVING OF THE SECRETARY OF THE YEAR AWARD, OR WHO WOULD BRING GREATER CREDIT AND EXAMPLE TO THE ENTIRE CORPS OF FOREIGN SERVICE SECRETARIES BY BEING SO SELECTED. SIGNED, JOHN GUNTHER DEAN, AMBASSADOR UNQUOTE DEAN

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